

**Lake Ripley Management District  
Meeting Minutes  
September 17, 2005**

**Project-Review Subcommittee Meeting**

**I. Call to Order**

John Molinaro called the subcommittee meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. Derek Hoffman was absent, but had submitted his project-scoring sheets and recommendations prior to the meeting. Paul Dearlove was in attendance to record the minutes and to provide any technical information that may be requested. He indicated that the meeting had been duly noticed. No members of the public were present.

**II. Discussion and Scoring of Proposed Cost-Share Projects**

It was noted that the subcommittee met on October 11, 2005, for the purpose of visiting the proposed project sites. Scoring had been completed separately by Molinaro and Hoffman for each project and then averaged. Projects could receive a maximum of 10 points based on several scoring criteria. Only those projects scoring a minimum of 6 points are moved out of subcommittee for possible Board approval. Proposed cost-share projects and their total (averaged) scores are as follows:

- A. Ball/Luzwick shoreline riprap (W9338 Ripley Rd.) – 7.5 points
- B. Ehrenberg shoreline riprap/buffer (W9297 Ripley Rd.) – 7.5 points
- C. Maric shoreline buffer (W9077 Ripley Rd.) – 3.0 points
- D. Gaulke/Reay shoreline repair and reinforcement (W9007-W9011 Ripley Rd.) – 7.0 points
- E. Brown fishery habitat using treefalls (N4272 Sleepy Hollow Rd.) – Not scored; recommended for F.K. Elson funding
- F. Golf Side Association shoreline bio-repair (Adjacent to W9441 Golf Side Ln.) – 6.0 points
- G. Baker fishery habitat using treefall (N4452 Park Rd.) – Not scored; recommended for F.K. Elson funding

**III. Adjournment**

Molinaro adjourned the meeting at 8:50 a.m.

**Regular Board Meeting**

**I. Call to Order/Roll Call**

The Lake Ripley Management District (LRMD) Board of Directors convened its regular monthly meeting at the Oakland Town Hall. Chairman Molinaro called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Board members present included John Molinaro, Jane Jacobsen-Brown, Dennis McCarthy, Mike Sabella, Gene Kapsner and Sheri Walz. Derek Hoffman was absent. Also present were Paul Dearlove (Project Manager), Roger Rude, Kent Brown, Ed Grunden, Jim Rank, Ron and Carole Wells, Susan Josheff (DNR), and Cambridge Cable TV 12.

**II. Public Comment**

Jim Rank asked about the nature and purpose of the subcommittee that met prior to the regular Board meeting. Molinaro responded by explaining the subcommittee's role in reviewing, scoring and recommending proposed cost-share projects that cannot be addressed through the state grant program. He said that additional discussion pertaining to the subcommittee and its project recommendations would take place later in the agenda.

**III. Minutes of Last Meeting**

The Board reviewed the minutes of the 09/17/05 meeting and had no additions or corrections. *Sabella moved to approve the minutes as written. Motion was seconded by McCarthy with no further discussion. Motion carried 6-0.*

**IV. Speaker on Regulating Water Levels: Susan Josheff, DNR**

Molinaro introduced Susan Josheff, a water regulation and zoning engineer with the DNR responsible for reviewing and permitting outlet control structures. He explained that Ms. Josheff was invited to discuss whether Lake Ripley was a suitable candidate for an outlet structure, namely to help moderate lake-level fluctuations during extreme weather conditions. He added that an exploratory committee was convened a number of years ago, but that the matter was dropped when the necessary property easements could not be obtained.

Ms. Josheff began by questioning why there was a perceived need for a regulatory structure at the outlet. She said it was the universal opinion of her colleagues she consulted that Lake Ripley was of prime ecological health. Consequently, she indicated that many of these same colleagues were surprised to learn that an outlet structure was being contemplated. The concern was that such a structure, regardless of its intended objective, risked doing more harm than good. One potential risk was a change in nutrient dynamics, potentially causing the lake to shift toward a more eutrophic and less desirable water quality state. Josheff pointed out that the natural fluctuation of water levels was also beneficial to various plants and aquatic life. She further cautioned that operating a dam is inherently reactive, and that ill-timed actions could create liability risk and lead to any number of unintended consequences, especially during flood events. She said the typical dam owner has a thankless job, and that people will have differing opinions on what lake levels are appropriate and how they should be managed. The following are some other issues and considerations Josheff addressed during her presentation:

1. Ownership or an easement would be required on the lands adjoining the outlet where the structure is to be placed. This would include an easement to access the site for purposes of operating and maintaining the structure.
2. Because any structure that restricts flow has the ability to change the Ordinary High Water Mark, determinations must be made as to the areas that could see increased flooding. Ownership or easements would then be required on these lands.
3. By state law, any structure would have to pass a minimum amount of flow at all times to protect downstream conditions. Completely cutting off flows to alleviate low-water situations in the lake would not be permissible. At best, she said that only a small increase in lake levels might be possible during low-flow conditions.
4. Factors other than outlet flows contribute to water loss and lowered lake levels, including evaporation, transpiration of plants, groundwater withdrawals and water diversions.
5. Detailed engineering analyses, an environmental assessment, and an operations and maintenance plan would be required as part of the permitting and review process.
6. The narrower the desired range of water-level fluctuation, the larger the structure that would be needed.
7. Important considerations for the District would include cost, liability risk, ongoing operation and maintenance requirements, unintended ecological threats, and hydrologic changes that can inadvertently create other problems.
8. Outlet structures often fail to alleviate high and low water situations as much as people might hope.
9. With respect to the channel as it currently exists, it is illegal for anyone to add or remove material (such as boulders) from the lake bed without a permit.

Discussion ensued regarding the historic condition of the outlet channel and its measured flow rates. Ron Wells—landowner adjacent to the outlet—questioned the need for a control structure after observing that the lake appeared to be in better shape this year than in prior years, despite the unusually low water conditions. Molinaro said that discussion was intended strictly for informational purposes, and that the Board was not presently in the midst of a proposal to do anything. He said the complaints he had received were from lakefront residents who had difficulties getting boats on and off their lifts. Jim Rank added that the other extreme was the problem of piers floating away during high water. Rank wondered whether there were any other strategies that could be pursued to improve the outlet if a dam was not advisable. Josheff responded that just about any strategy to regulate water levels would involve the use of a “dam,” and that all the issues she mentioned would still need to be addressed.

## **V. Treasurer’s Report**

Sabella distributed and reviewed the quarterly financial statements as of September 30, 2005, for both the LRMD and Lake Ripley Priority Lake Project (LRPLP).

**LRMD:** Current assets included a cash position of \$59,253.53 in checking, an \$80,000.00 certificate of deposit that will mature in December, and a \$31,652.06 receivable from the LRPLP. There was also a \$372.00 “clearing” entry for an expense that had been inappropriately coded to the LRMD billing account. Current liabilities consisted of \$104.87 in accrued federal payroll taxes that were withheld from harvesting wages. The Statement of Operations showed total revenue of \$15,018.65 and total operating expenses of \$5,735.25 for the three months ended September 30, 2005. Year-to-date, total revenues were \$47,072.53 and total operating expenses were \$11,919.70. Sabella also compared budgeted amounts versus actual expenses incurred during the first nine months. He pointed out that any unused funds get carried over and reduce the levy for the following year. Other reported financial information included a detailed listing of individual transactions, and a copy of the general ledger.

**LRPLP:** Sabella noted that the LRPLP account is funded through a state grant. He explained that the grant is currently able to cover most of the staff and cost-sharing expenses associated with the implementation of the Priority Lake Project. Current assets included a cash position of \$18,038.60 in checking, \$24,999.87 in the Nonpoint Source (project cost-sharing) account, and \$200.00 in office petty cash. Current liabilities consisted of \$31,652.06 payable back to the LRMD. The Statement of Operations showed total revenues for the quarter of \$8,122.34 in mostly cost-share reimbursements. Direct costs associated with project cost sharing were \$3,361.75, which translated into revenue over direct costs of

\$4,760.59. Total operating expenses, consisting primarily of staff wages and office expenses, were \$14,489.82. Sabella also provided a detailed listing of individual transactions and a copy of the general ledger for the third quarter.

***Jacobsen-Brown moved to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. Motion was seconded by Walz with no further discussion. Motion carried 6-0.***

## **VI. Project Manager's Report**

Dearlove distributed updated phone logs and reported on his activities since the last regular meeting. He said that a special zebra mussel alert had been distributed to all lakefront property owners. The purpose of the mailing was to pass along additional information about this latest invasive species threat, and to ask that residents carefully inspect their boats and piers during fall removals and report any findings. No new discoveries had been reported since the mailing was distributed. He said that he and McCarthy were also continuing to regularly check the zebra mussel traps each time water quality monitoring was performed.

Dearlove indicated that he attended an invasive species training workshop sponsored by the U.W.-Extension that proved very informative. Dearlove subsequently entered into a partnership with Ed Grunden and the Cambridge Aquatic Environmental Club to pursue grant funding for various educational projects. These include developing a volunteer watercraft inspection program, producing a short educational video, and disseminating informational materials to registered boat owners in the area. He indicated that Ed Grunden was in attendance and would be providing additional details. Other recent activities with the high school included co-hosting a bus tour of the watershed, and doing more maintenance work in the Town Hall rain garden.

Dearlove passed out copies of the Lake Ripley opinion survey that was mailed to both LRMD and watershed property owners. He explained the purpose of the survey, and said he hoped to present the results in the next Ripples. He said he was getting a good return, and that he was currently in the process of compiling and analyzing the responses as they arrive. The last comprehensive opinion survey had been conducted in 2000 as part of preparing the Lake Ripley Management Plan.

It was noted that the removal and winterization of the weed-harvesting equipment would start next week. He concluded his report by providing the Board with an update on pending cost-share projects and the status of state cost-share funding.

## **VII. Old Business**

### ***A. Subcommittee Recommendations for LRMD Cost-share Projects***

Molinaro indicated that he and Hoffman had met earlier in the week to conduct site visits and review project proposals. He said that of the five project proposals that were reviewed, all but one scored high enough to be brought before the Board. He reviewed the details of each project (see subcommittee meeting minutes), the scores that were awarded, and what factors were considered for scoring purposes. He said that the subcommittee was requesting Board approval to move forward with the four projects.

Dearlove indicated that, as things currently stand, these and any future projects would have to be paid for using LRMD cost-share dollars. He explained that our 2005-06 state grant allocations had already been matched with state-eligible project commitments. He said that while he could provide preliminary cost estimates, he did not have exact cost figures for the proposed shoreline projects that were being considered. Dearlove estimated there was sufficient funding based on knowing what such projects generally cost from past experience. However, he cautioned that the money was getting used up fast.

Sabella pointed out that the entire approval process was cost driven, and that it was difficult to commit to anything without knowing precise project costs. He advised tabling a decision until more detailed cost information was available. Dearlove responded that he could obtain better cost estimates only by preparing plans and putting the projects out for bid. Sabella asked if this process was the same for DNR-qualified projects. Dearlove answered affirmatively. Molinaro added that all of the proposed projects, with the possible exception of Golf Side, would be eligible under the DNR program and paid for by the state grant if the money was there. He did not oppose tabling actual cost-sharing decisions until better cost estimates could be obtained. However, he said we would not have hard numbers until we actually put the projects out for bid, which wouldn't happen unless authorization was given to proceed. He then suggested it might be appropriate to have two votes. The first vote would be on whether a particular project was worth pursuing, and then the second would be on whether money could be made available to fund it. Jacobsen-Brown asked if it was even necessary to vote on whether the projects were worth doing since that was the subcommittee's job. Molinaro replied, and Sabella concurred, that it was the responsibility of the full Board to make those decisions after hearing the recommendations of the subcommittee.

**Sabella moved to table cost-sharing decisions on each of the projects until the next meeting or whenever sufficient cost information was available. McCarthy seconded and there was no further discussion. Motion carried 6-0.**

**B. Invasive Species Report**

(Covered under VI. Project Manager's Report and VIII.A. New Business due to agenda repair)

**VIII. New Business**

**A. Educational Video – Partnership Proposal (Ed Grunden)**

Ed Grunden, representing the Cambridge Aquatic Environmental Club, presented additional details on the partnering and project ideas that he and Dearlove were working on related to invasive species. Handouts were provided outlining the proposed outreach strategies, estimated costs, list of partners, and copies of a federal grant application that was recently submitted. He explained that a combination of state and federal grants, student volunteers, and the U.W.-Milwaukee's fellowship program would cover most of the anticipated costs. He also requested that the LRMD contribute \$600.00 in cash to the effort. End products would include the production and targeted mailing of an informational flyer, a 10-minute videotaped public service announcement, and a volunteer watercraft-inspection program. Grunden said he was hoping to organize an initial planning meeting soon to bring all the key partners together.

Dearlove reminded the Board that it had previously discussed and supported these ideas. He said it was his opinion that the proposal represented an excellent partnership opportunity for securing the necessary grant funding and video-production expertise. He added that our most recent partnership to create and maintain the Town Hall rain gardens had already proved to be a successful venture, and that we could expect to soon receive up to \$1,500 in grant reimbursements for that effort. Jacobsen-Brown personally thanked Grunden and his students for all their support, time and dedication over the years.

**Molinaro moved to contribute \$600.00 in matching funds using available contingency reserves, and to provide an additional \$50.00 from the F.K. Elson Memorial Fund. Motion was seconded by Sabella. Molinaro asked if there was any discussion, and said he wanted to hear from each of the Board members. All Board members present concurred that it was a good use of funds. Motion carried 6-0.**

**B. S.E. Wisconsin Regional Lakes Workshop**

Molinaro informed the Board that he and Dearlove were again participating on a planning committee to organize a S.E. Wisconsin regional lakes workshop. The one-day educational workshop is hosted each year by the Wisconsin Association of Lakes, and is typically held in Waukesha during the month of February. The 2006 workshop was set for February 18<sup>th</sup>. The mini-convention usually covers lake-related topics of particular interest to this region of the state. People were invited to submit topic ideas that he and Dearlove could bring to the planning meeting for consideration.

In other New Business, McCarthy suggested that we send a thank you letter to Bob and June Ayres for letting us install a zebra mussel trap on their pier. He said they offered to let us use their pier again next year for monitoring purposes. Dearlove said he would gladly take care of it.

**IX. Correspondence**

Sabella noted that a \$750 penalty notice was received from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development. He said the Department was claiming that our Workman's Compensation insurance lapsed for nine days while we changed brokers. Sabella informed the Board that the notice was sent in error, and that he would make sure the issue is rectified. He explained that we had stayed with the same insurance company and changed brokers only.

**X. Adjournment**

**McCarthy moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:25 a.m. Motion was seconded by Sabella with no further discussion. Motion carried 6-0.** Next meeting: December 17, 2005

Respectfully Submitted,

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Derek Hoffman, Secretary

Date

Recorder: PDD